

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 1813

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: RH, PDEV, UK, MU
SUBJ: RHODESIA: APPROACH TO THE OMANIS

REF: STATE 300532, MUSCAT 1779

1. BRITISH AMBASSADOR TREDWELL TELLS ME SCENARIO HAS CHANGED
AND THAT HE WILL NOT BE SEEING THE SULTAN REGARDING "CARGOMAN."
INSTEAD, OMANI FOREIGN MINISTER ZAWAWI WAS APPROACHED BY A
BRITISH MINISTER OF STATE DURING ZAWAWI'S DEC 9-16 STAY IN
LONDON, AND BRIT EMBASSY HERE WILL BE FOLLOWING UP WITH OMANGOV,
PROBABLY AT LESS THAN AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL. TREADWELL GAVE ME
NO INDICATION WHAT ZAWAWI'S RESPONSE HAD BEEN IN LONDON.

2. FROM OUR CAAG (FAA) TEAM HERE, FOLLOWING PICTURE OF
CARGOMAN EMERGES. COMPANY ESTABLISHED EARLY 1977 AND
OPERATES ONE AIRCRAFT, A DC-8 BEARING ITS COLORS. PLANE IS OWNED
BY AIR TRANS AFRICA, A RHODESIAN-BASED FIRM WHICH ALSO OWNS ANOTHER
DC-8 OPERATED UNDER AIR GABON COLORS. AIR TRANS AFRICA PROVIDES
CREWS FOR BOTH THESE PLANES, CREWS ORIGINALLY TRAINED BY UNITED
AIRLINES IN DENVER. BOTH PLANES ARE MAINTAINED IN RHODESIA, SUCH
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MAINTENANCE OVERSEEN BY THE FRENCH RPT FRENCH EQUIVALENT OF OUR
FAA. CARGOMAN DIRECTORS INCLUDE QAIS ZAWAWI, OMAN ZAWAWI,
WALID ZAWAWI (OMAR'S TEEN-AGE SON) AND ANGUS HUME (A ZAWAWI
BUSINESS MANAGER.)

3. LOCAL CARGOMAN MANAGERSAT SEEB AIRPORT IS T.M. LONGMORE,
AN ENGLISHMAN AND FORMER EMPLOYEE OF AIR TRANS AFRICA. THE COM-

PANY BUILT SMALL OFFICE OF ITS OWN AT THE AIRPORT AND INSTALLED GENERATOR TO PROVIDE ITS OWN POWER. SEVERAL MONTHS AGO THE COMPANY, WITH SPECIFIC SUPPORT IN FORM OF A LETTER FROM THE PALACE SIGNED BY SULTAN'S EXTREMELY INFLUENTIAL EQUERRY, BRIG. TIM LANDON, OBTAINED LICENSE TO INSTALL AN EXCEEDINGLY POWERFUL (AND UNUSUAL FOR ORDINARY CARGO AIRLINE) COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM WHICH WE UNDERSTAND ENABLES ITS GROUND OFFICE AT SEEB TO HAVE ALMOST IMMEDIATE, HEMISPHERE-WIDE CONTACT WITH ITS PLANE.

4. WHILE CARGOMAN'S DC-8 IS KNOWN TO HAVE FLOWN TO AUSTRALIA, VARIOUS GULF DESTINATIONS AND TO SALALAH, ITS NORMAL FLIGHT PATTERN INCLUDES A WEEKLY ROUTING THAT BRINGS IT FROM RHODESIA TO OMAN AND ONWARD TO AMSTERDAM. PLANE IS SELDOM ON SEEB APRON MORE THAN DAY OR SO AT A TIME. INFORMATION ABOUTSCARGOES CARRIED IS SKETCHY; VEHICLES, LIVE ANIMALS AND GENRAL CARGO HAVE BEEN TRANSPORTED AT TIMES.

5. CARGOMAN OPERATED UNDER TEMPORARY LICENSE FROM OMAN CIVIL AVIATION DEPT UNTIL JULY 1, 1977, THEN WAS ISSUED REGULAR SIX-MONTH AIR OPERATORS'S CERTIFICATE. LATTER IS DUE FOR ANNUAL RENEWAL JANUARY 1, 1978 AND EXTENSION APPLICATION CURRENTLY BEING DISCUSSED BETWEEN COMPANY AND CIVAIR DEPT. KLM, WHICH OPERATES SIMILAR AIRCRAFT OF ITS OWN, HAS CONTRACT WITH AIR TRANS AFRICA TO PROVIDE OPERATING PROCEDURES, OPERATING MANUALS AND CREW SIMULATOR TIME AT AMSTERDAM FOR THESE TWO DC-8'S; BECAUSE OF THIS CONNECTION, AMCIT CAAG REPRESENTATIVE DAN JENKINS HAS INSTRUC-
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TIONS FROM OMAN CIVAIR DIRECTOR SALIM BIN NASIR TO PROCEED TO AMSTERDAM IN SPRING 1978 TO CHECK OUT KLM FACILITIES BEING USED BY CARGOMAN CREWS.

6. AS POINT OF INTEREST, I WAS TOLD YEAR OR TWO AGO THAT BRIG. LANDON HAS A BROTHER WHO OWNS AND FARMS SOME PROPERTY IN RHODESIA. LANDON IS OF COURSE VERY CLOSE TO THE ZAWAWIS, AS HE IS TO THE SULTAN.
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